



Early Journal Content on JSTOR, Free to Anyone in the World

This article is one of nearly 500,000 scholarly works digitized and made freely available to everyone in the world by JSTOR.

Known as the Early Journal Content, this set of works include research articles, news, letters, and other writings published in more than 200 of the oldest leading academic journals. The works date from the mid-seventeenth to the early twentieth centuries.

We encourage people to read and share the Early Journal Content openly and to tell others that this resource exists. People may post this content online or redistribute in any way for non-commercial purposes.

Read more about Early Journal Content at <http://about.jstor.org/participate-jstor/individuals/early-journal-content>.

JSTOR is a digital library of academic journals, books, and primary source objects. JSTOR helps people discover, use, and build upon a wide range of content through a powerful research and teaching platform, and preserves this content for future generations. JSTOR is part of ITHAKA, a not-for-profit organization that also includes Ithaka S+R and Portico. For more information about JSTOR, please contact support@jstor.org.

Zur Geschichte der Vers libres in der neu-französischen Poesie von PH. AUG. BECKER. Halle, 1888. 8vo, pp. 37.

In this doctor's dissertation, offered at Strasbourg and published also in the *Zeitschrift für romanische Philologie* (vol. xii, pp. 89-125), the author examines the origin and development of free verse in modern French poetry. Free verse he defines: a non-strophic metrical structure, consisting of lines of unequal length, arranged at will, and having a free disposition of rimes.

The history of free verse begins in the Greek chorus, continues in the church sequences, and is traced in the *pastourelles* and *motets* of mediæval French literature. The Pre-renaissance poetry of France contains also certain elements of free verse, which however disappeared before the rise of classical imitation. Its modern form BECKER determines to be an importation from Italy and to have arrived full-fledged on French soil in a madrigal and a *pasquin* (before 1525?) of MELLIN DE SAINT-GELAIS. This first French madrigal was followed considerably later by others of RONSARD and BAIF. The latter wrote also dithyrambs after the Greek. These imitations however were sporadic and remained without abiding influence.

The pastorals of the seventeenth century reintroduced, from their Italian models, the madrigal into France. The vogue of the 'Astrée' and of its imitations, the Florentine complexion of the royal court, the Roman polish of the Hôtel de Rambouillet, all combined to make the madrigal the poetical verse of society, as was instanced by the 'Guirlande de Julie' (1641). Under its influence the form of the epigram was gradually changed in the direction of free verse, as is seen in the works of GOMBAULD and BRÉBEUF, until the two kinds were hardly distinguished save by their subject.

The introduction of free verse into other forms of poetry than the madrigal and epigram is due to VOITURE. His example was followed by the poets of the *Précieuse* school, but was restricted for a time to epistles, *étrennes*, and the like. With the sixth decade of the century the use of this style became general in eclogs, elegies and idylls, and reached lasting celebri-

ty in the 'Contes' and 'Fables' of LA FONTAINE. The letters and tales of the age show also in their mingled prose and poetry the popularity of the *vers libres*, and free strophes were evolved from them as legitimate descendants.

An important part of the dissertation is devoted to the history of free verse on the stage, united to musical compositions of Italian origin, as the ballet and the musical drama. In this phase it attained its highest development in the scenic plays of CORNEILLE and MOLIÈRE, and the librettos of QUINAULT.

In the eighteenth century VOLTAIRE and the librettists continued the tradition of free verse. The Romantic school, however, drove it from artistic works, and its last traces are found in ALFRED DE MUSSET, a conscious imitation of LA FONTAINE. Free verse, as a form of poetry, passed away with the society which fostered it.

A review of DR. BECKER'S work can be little else than a summary, so complete is his treatment. He would have added attractiveness to his subject by a more systematic exposition, coupled with clearness of phrase.

F. M. WARREN.

Johns Hopkins University.

THE MODERN LANGUAGE ASSOCIATION OF OHIO.

In vol. iii (p. 263) of this Journal, attention was called to the formation of a Modern Language Association in connection with the Teachers' Association of North Carolina. The gratifying news comes to us of the establishment also in Ohio of a second organisation similar to that of the Old North State, and we hope that the time may not be far distant when associations of like import may be formed in many states of the Union; they would naturally serve an important end in arousing sympathy and developing higher ideals for modern language work, by the discussion of questions of a local character and of detail that cannot come before the general organisation. As a valuable auxiliary, therefore, in the promotion of the best interests of modern linguistic culture, we would give the new organisation a hearty welcome and augur for it a successful career of missionary labor. Below will be found a